

Local bike-walking trail given national status

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By John Hayes, Pittsburgh Post-Gazette

With miles of biking-hiking trails on both sides of the Allegheny, Monongahela and Ohio rivers, who needs roads?

Last month, the U.S. Department of the Interior and National Park Service designated the Three Rivers Heritage Trail a National Recreation Trail, one of a few in the country that exceed a recreational purpose by connecting dozens of riverfront communities and providing alternative routes of transportation throughout the region. The unfinished 22-mile trail and greenway system is designed for cyclists, walkers, runners, and in some places rollerbladers. Signs along the trail highlight Pittsburgh's landscape, history and culture.

Map

An interactive map of the trail is at www.friendsoftheriverfront.org/map.

"We are fortunate to have such an expansive trail system linking our riverfront communities within the Pittsburgh region," said Thomas Baxter, executive director of Friends of the Riverfront, a nonprofit group that was established to create and expand the Three Rivers Heritage Trail. "Together, with community leaders and our partners Allegheny County and the Pennsylvania Environmental Council, we are working on planning and building new segments of trails along the riverfronts of Allegheny County."

Allegheny County Executive Dan Onorato said, in a written statement, that the miles of trails lining the county's riverfront are an important amenity to the region.

"This designation for the Three Rivers Heritage Trail is proof of our successful partnerships with businesses, foundations and trail groups to continue connecting communities with our waterways," he said.

John Hayes: jhayes@post-gazette.com or 412-263-1991.

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